



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **New Task Force to Empower Nonprofits with Resources to Address Racial Equity in their Organizations, Communities**

(LEXINGTON, Ky.—) Kentucky Nonprofit Network (KNN), the state association of nonprofits, [announced a new Nonprofit Racial Equity Task Force today](#) and shared results of a first-of-its-kind survey measuring the diversity practices and strategies of Kentucky's nonprofit organizations.

In 2020, KNN saw an opportunity to help Kentucky's nonprofit sector, the [fourth largest employer in the Commonwealth](#), work together to build on the core strengths of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The ultimate goal is to help nonprofits achieve greater client trust and engagement; larger employee, board member and volunteer pools; better collaboration and decision-making opportunities; and stronger results in accomplishing the organization's mission. The task force was created to guide KNN's efforts.

The consulting firm, Decide Diversity is providing expertise for the task force in data collection and analysis, as well as facilitating listening sessions and curating and creating needed resources for nonprofits.

Toyota Kentucky provided KNN with a \$25,000 grant to launch the task force. "As another significant employer in Kentucky, Toyota knows that investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the nonprofits sector is good for business, good for communities, and good for Kentuckians," said Kim Sweazy, Corporate Communications with Toyota Kentucky.

The task force surveyed Kentucky nonprofit executives on their organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies and point to the needs of smaller nonprofits as an important area of opportunity. Over half of the survey respondents represented organizations with ten or fewer employees and annual operating budgets of less than \$1 million, which also reflects [83% of nonprofits in Kentucky](#).

Task force member, Niki Kinkade elaborated on the concerns of small nonprofits.

"Last spring, our organization knew we needed to be there for our community and provide an outlet for people to express themselves – and did that through a new exhibit, The Art of Being Black: Conversation and Experience. But we also felt we needed to do more and as a small nonprofit, we weren't quite sure where to start," said Kinkade. "KNN's racial equity resources have been so valuable to our organization, and I am looking forward to this work reaching more small nonprofits like ours," she added.

The survey results identified four key diversity gaps and as a next step, the task force invites nonprofit staff, board members, volunteers and consumers to participate in listening sessions to share their thoughts on racial equity gaps in board governance, staffing, programming and volunteerism. The listening sessions will begin on May 13 at 2pm ET and will be held each Thursday until June 3. Interested individuals can register online at: [www.kynonprofits.org/learn/racialequity](http://www.kynonprofits.org/learn/racialequity).

"If we represent 10% of the Kentucky workforce and are the state's fourth largest employer, which is true of Kentucky's nonprofit sector, we have an obligation and a responsibility to make sure our teams, boards of directors, program participants and suppliers reflect all people in Kentucky," said Dr. OJ Oleka, president of the [Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities](#) who serves on the task force and is also a member of the KNN board of directors.

Additional members of the Nonprofit Racial Equity Task Force introduced at the press conference include:

- Jen Algire, president of [The Greater Clark Foundation](#), Winchester
- Catrena Bowman-Thomas, executive director of [Northern Kentucky Community Action](#), Covington
- Ann Coffey, CEO, [Center for Nonprofit Excellence](#), Louisville
- Stephanie Devine, executive director, [Teach For America Appalachia](#), Hazard
- DeVone Holt, vice president of external affairs at [Goodwill Industries of Kentucky](#), Louisville
- Niki Kinkade, executive director, [Art Center of the Bluegrass](#), Danville
- Bill Oldham, executive director, [Community Education of Bowling Green-Warren County](#), Bowling Green
- Tawanda Owsley, vice president of development, [Hosparus Health](#), Louisville

KNN CEO, Danielle Clore urged nonprofits to join with them and their nonprofit colleagues to imagine the potential and opportunities ahead.

"While 57% of survey respondents reported they did not have or were not sure if their organization had a diversity strategy, over half of these same respondents indicate a desire for more resources," said Clore. "This level of interest and the fact that we had respondents from 118 of Kentucky's 120 counties indicate that many nonprofits are ready to work together to listen, learn, discuss and then move to action and lead change. We invite folks to join us in this important work ahead," Clore added.

The Racial Equity in Kentucky's Nonprofit Sector full survey report and executive summary are available for download at <https://www.kynonprofits.org/learn/racialequityreport>, as are additional racial equity resources for nonprofits: <https://www.kynonprofits.org/learn/racialequity>.

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**About Kentucky Nonprofit Network:** KNN is the state association of nonprofits, existing to strengthen and advance Kentucky's nonprofit community. Celebrating 19 years of service to the sector and over 820 members strong, KNN provides nonprofit organizations with a unified public policy voice, professional development opportunities and resources, and member benefits. For more information, visit [www.kynonprofits.org](http://www.kynonprofits.org).